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FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Nesting of the Wilson Snipe in California.—According to Grinnell, Bryant and Storer (*Game Birds of California*, p. 355), there is only one published record of the taking of the eggs of the Wilson or Jack Snipe (*Gallinago delicata*) in California. That record is of a set taken by A. Van Rossem for J. Mailliard near Tejon Pass, in the extreme northern part of Los Angeles County (J. Mailliard, CONDOR, XVI, 1914, p. 261). These authors say, however, that Belding (MS) states that the species breeds at Webber Lake, that Cooper was informed that it bred at Lake Tahoe, that George Neale reports two small young as found at Lake Tahoe early in August, 1912, also that three young were found in Sierra Valley, Plumas County, September 1, 1899, and that Bryant in the first week in June, 1914, saw Snipe in nuptial flight at Lower Klamath Lake. The Mailliard record is, therefore, the only one of eggs actually taken or even seen in California. In view of these facts it seems worth while to put on record my recent experience with this bird.

During June and July of 1918, I accompanied Dr. John Van Denburgh and Mr. Joseph R. Slevin on a collecting trip through northern California and southern Oregon. We traveled by automobile and were equipped for camping. Our collecting activities were confined primarily to reptiles, amphibians, and birds' nests and eggs.

On the night of June 1, we camped at the edge of Grasshopper Meadow which is in Lassen County, California. Dr. Van Denburgh has told (CONDOR, XXI, 1919, p. 39) of our finding the Western Willet nesting in this meadow. Soon after making camp, our attention was attracted by the noise made by a number of Jack Snipe in their nuptial flight. Although it was too dark to see the birds, the noise was characteristic and not to be mistaken. We had spread our blankets in the lee of a haystack in the edge of the marsh and the peculiar booming noise made by the Snipe could be heard very late in the night; indeed, I think I heard it throughout the night whenever I was awake. The next day while searching through the meadow, about twenty Jack Snipe were seen and heard flying about in broad circles high in air, as vividly described by Grinnell (*Game Birds*, p. 356). No nests, however, were found.

A few days later (June 7), we camped again at this meadow, where we again saw several Jack Snipe performing their interesting flight, as before. This time I was more successful and succeeded in finding two nests. The first contained one egg, the other three. I took the set of three, but left the one until the next day, hoping another might be laid before we left that camp. The next morning about eight o'clock the nest was visited again but it still contained only one egg, which I took, as we were leaving the locality that morning. This nest was found by flushing the bird when only a few feet distant. The bird circled about a few moments, then alighted on the top of a hay-press derrick near by, which was at least thirty feet high. Each of these nests was in a small clump of fine *Carex* growing in water perhaps six inches deep. The nests were simple structures composed of short pieces of *Carex*, some still greenish or not altogether dead. The nest material, although scanty, was sufficient to support the eggs above the water.

Two days later (June 9), while working a small wet meadow about three miles west of Alturas I found my third nest of the Jack Snipe. This nest contained three eggs and was in construction essentially like the other two, but it was in short grass on dry ground at the edge of a marsh.

All the eggs in these three sets were fresh. The single egg (measuring 1.48x1.14 inches), and the first set of three (1.44x1.12, 1.42x1.16, and 1.37x1.13 inches) are in the Museum of the California Academy of Sciences; the set taken near Alturas is in the collection of Dr. Van Denburgh.—BARTON WARREN EVERMANN, *Museum, California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California, February 5, 1919.*

Records of Larus heermanni with White Primary Coverts.—Mr. George Willett (CONDOR, XX, 1918, p. 127, fig. 21) has recently described and figured aberrant specimens of *Larus heermanni* having the primary coverts of each wing white. Mr. P. A. Taverner (CONDOR, XX, 1918, p. 187) has recorded like specimens from Alert Bay, British Columbia. The writer observed several such birds at Redondo, California, in 1911, and one at Pa-

cific Grove, on June 21, 1918. Each of these had a large squarish white blotch symmetrically located near the angle of each wing, in some cases more definitely and more extensively developed on the one side than on the other. It is probable that these variants are "sporadically recurring" mutants, as suggested by Mr. Taverner.—CARL L. HUBBS, *Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, Illinois, January 23, 1919.*

An Albino Black-chinned Hummingbird.—Albino hummingbirds are of comparatively rare occurrence, and it seems, therefore, worth while to put on record an individual *Archilochus alexandri* of this character. It was taken at the ranch of Mr. Howard Lacey, on Turtle Creek, a few miles southwest of Kerrville, Texas, by Mr. Shirley Coppock, on July 20, 1913, and was presented to the Biological Survey collection, in which it is no. 241043, U. S. Nat. Mus. It is an adult female and is entirely pure white without a dark feather anywhere.—HARRY C. OBERHOLSER, *Washington, D. C., February 3, 1919.*

Relative Abundance of Ducks in the Rio Grande Valley.—An observer who hunts ducks regularly, in the same general locality, by the same general methods, ought to find in the record of his daily bag a very reliable indication of the relative abundance of the various species. The following is such a record, based on two years hunting in that part of the Rio Grande Valley within 50 miles of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Species	Killed	Relative abundance on basis of 100	Relative abundance (corrected)
Mallard	77	43	40
Green-winged Teal	28	16	18
Pintail	20	11	12
Spoonbill	19	11	10
Baldpate	9	5	5
Mottled Duck (?)	9	5	5
Red-breasted Merganser	0	0	5
Blue-winged Teal	7	4	1
Gadwall	4	2	1
Canvasback	2	1	1
Redhead	2	1	1
Golden-eye	1	1	1
	178	100	100

In the third column I have made estimated allowances for certain extraneous factors. For instance: Mallards are reduced because they winter here, and hence are available for hunting during a longer period. Green-winged Teal are raised because they are mostly gone by November 5. Pintails are raised because only a very few winter. Spoonbills are reduced because they always occur in small flocks, and the number killed is for this reason relatively great as compared with the number seen. Their stupidity is about offset by the fact that when Mallards are abundant, they are not often shot at. Mottled Ducks pass southward early in the season and accordingly are not reduced, as was done with Mallards. Red-breasted Mergansers are not killed, but are common in winter,—their relative abundance is estimated. The remaining species are not common. The table does not include the Cinnamon Teal, since this is a spring but not a fall migrant here, and is not seen during the hunting season.

The hunting was done about equally over river, ponds, sloughs, and flooded fields, and about equally as pass shooting, jump shooting, and decoy shooting, so that the figures given should not be particularly affected by specific habits or habitat.

This table is offered as a suggested method, rather than as a final conclusion. Based on five years instead of two, it ought to be quite the most accurate possible method of determining relative abundance of species.—ALDO LEOPOLD, *Albuquerque, New Mexico, February 1, 1919.*

The California Shrike Probably Mates for Life.—The recent article by Mr. F. C. Willard (CONDOR, XX, 1918, p. 167), suggesting the probability that many pairs of birds remain mated for life, has brought to light considerable information on this subject;

but, as most of the evidence submitted has concerned nesting pairs of birds, it may be of interest to record the following winter observations on one species.

Throughout the greater part of the San Joaquin Valley the California Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus gambeli*) is a very abundant resident and, because of its habit of perching on telephone and telegraph wires while watching for prey, it is a rather conspicuous species at all times. Some idea of the abundance of this bird may be obtained from the statement that, in driving a distance of fifteen miles along the county roads, or even along the state highway, the count usually totaled from twenty to thirty birds.

Eighteen years of observation had convinced me that certain pairs of shrikes remained mated through the fall and winter months; but I had never given the matter any serious thought until the appearance of Mr. Willard's article, which greatly stimulated my interest. And, as I had occasion all through the last three months of the past year to make almost daily trips by automobile between many of the towns in Stanislaus and Merced counties, it soon became my regular practice to take a mental census of the Shrikes seen along the way. After making the count innumerable times I found that, with remarkably little variation, the average was one *pair* of birds seen for every five single individuals noted. In enumerating pairs I counted as such only birds seen perched close together or flying in company; the few doubtful cases were down as two single birds. To assume that each pair of Shrikes bring to maturity an average of five young each season would probably be getting very close to the actual figures. Is it not probable, then, that the larger figure in the ratio of five to one represents birds of the year which have never been mated, with, possibly, just an occasional adult which, through one agency or another, has been deprived of its mate?

The observations as outlined above have firmly convinced me that, once mated, the California Shrike spends the remainder of its life in company with the individual of its choice.—JOHN G. TYLER, *Turlock, California, February 5, 1919.*

Another California Record of the Bendire Thrasher.—On May 7, 1916, I collected an adult male of the Bendire Thrasher (*Toxostoma bendirei*) near Victorville, Mohave Desert, California. The bird is now no. 1366, collection W. M. P. To quote Mr. Swarth: "The Bendire Thrasher is a most extraordinary take. From the date it would seem likely that it was a breeding bird, and it would be of great interest if you could actually find a nest of this species out there. As far as I can see, this specimen is precisely like others from Tucson, Arizona." I will say further that I have made many excursions to this locality, but after most careful search I have failed to discover any thrasher nesting there except the Leconte, and this species only rather locally.—WRIGHT M. PIERCE, *Claremont, California, February 8, 1919.*

Gray Gyrfalcon Taken in Oregon.—On November 17, 1916, while shooting ducks over a small seepage pond on the Hermiston, Oregon, irrigation project, Albert Humphrey of Pendleton, Oregon, shot a large hawk as it swooped down over the water to snatch up a dead Mallard that had just been shot. Knowing my interest in birds, Humphrey brought the bird to Pendleton; but as I was out of town at the time a friend skinned and salted the specimen for me. It proved to be a Gray Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus rusticolus*). Some time later I made it up as a study skin. So far as I can learn this is the first record of the occurrence of the species in Oregon.—STANLEY G. JEWETT, *Pendleton, Oregon, February 11, 1919.*

Random Notes.—In January, 1919, Mr. Sefton brought me two females of *Mergus serrator.* I mounted one and made the other into a skin. On skinning the first one I could detect no "fishy" odor, so I sliced off the breast meat and had it cooked. It proved so savory that we cooked the other. They were equal in flavor to the average duck. The stomachs contained a mass of what appeared to be shredded grass.

The big flood of January, 1916, covered most of the salt marshes near San Diego and drowned most of the Little Black Rails (*Creciscus coturniculus*). I have not been able to find one since the flood.

January 30, 1919, a Marbled Godwit was brought to me for the Museum collection. On skinning it I found it was lame, with one hip considerably atrophied, so it may have been unable to go on further south.

In June, 1891, I heard the song of a Wilson Snipe at dusk over a marsh in Owens Valley. I have no doubt but that this species bred there.

The Long-billed Dowitchers have been common around the bays all winter. I saw several about the first of February.—FRANK STEPHENS, *San Diego, California, February 12, 1919.*

A Supposed California-taken Trumpeter Swan.—Reference is made in the "Game Birds of California" (page 254) to a juvenile Trumpeter Swan from California in the British Museum, recorded by Count Salvadori in the "Catalogue of Birds" (vol. XXVII, p. 35). I examined this bird in November, 1908, at a time when the variations of size and points of difference between the Whistling and Trumpeter swans were fresh in my mind. Some four years before this date Mr. P. A. Taverner and I had begun a study of the swans. We had accumulated a large series of measurements, and Mr. Taverner had made many drawings to scale of the heads. This material was before me when I studied the series of swans in the British Museum. The bird itself is given in the "Catalogue of Birds" as "c. Juv. sk. California. J. Richards, Esq. [P.]."; and the number on the label is "57.10.9.2", indicating that the skin was registered on October 9, 1857. Who the donor, "J. Richards", was I have been unable to find out; no reference is made to him by Dr. Sharpe in his published account of the bird collection. The neck of the swan contains a newspaper dated San Francisco, December 8, 1856, so there is little doubt the bird is correctly assigned to California. The feathers of the head are gray, as are those of the back and flanks, the primaries and tail feathers; the axillars are whitish gray, the beak black with a faintly indicated spot that is reddish in the dried skin, but would be flesh color in life. The culmen is V-shaped, and the age of the bird is under a year; fixing the age is comparatively easy, but deciding as to the identity of the species is another matter.

A juvenile male swan taken on Lake St. Clair, on the Michigan side, March 27, 1908, and known as no. 61 in the series of measurements prepared by Mr. Taverner and myself, was found to match very closely the California bird in color, outline of beak, and age; the flesh-colored spot in front of the eye of no. 61 is surrounded by feathers, while in the California bird the feather line has receded sufficiently to leave the spot exposed. Fortunately the sternum with the trachea and bronchial tubes of no. 61 have been preserved and would alone identify it as a Whistling Swan; so there is little doubt that the California bird too, is of this species. Both birds belong to the straight-beaked type that approaches closely in the shape of the beak to the Trumpeter Swan and is often difficult to place without the sternum. Swans of the two species overlap in measurements in their first year. To illustrate this I give the measurements of three swans all under a year old, two the birds already discussed, the other a Trumpeter Swan taken at Leg Lake, Lincoln County, Washington, November 24, 1906.

Collection	Locality and Date	Age and Sex	Corner of eye to tip of bill	Corner of eye to rear of nostril	Rear of nostril to tip of bill	Culmen	Culmen line to loop of gape	Depth of bill	Length	Wing	Tail	Number of feathers in tail	Species
British Museum 57.10.9.2	California	juv.	4.8	2.78	2.02	3.1	1.37	1.75	(56.?)	21.5	5.1	20	*Cygnus sp.*
Series 61	St. Clair Flats, Michigan, March 27, 1908	♂ juv.	4.62	2.5	2.12	3.2	1.1	1.75	50.75	20.4	6.5	20	*Cygnus columbianus*
Coll. J.H.F. No. 12407	Leg Lake, Lincoln County, Washington, November 24, 1906	juv.	4.9	2.8	2.1	3.5	1.3	1.85	———	20.2	5.3	20	*Cygnus buccinator*

—J. H. FLEMING, *Toronto, Ontario, Canada, March 15, 1919.*

Bubo virginianus subarcticus in North Dakota.—Authentic published records of *Bubo virginianus subarcticus* in North Dakota are not numerous. Although this subspecies is reported as nesting within the State, all such examples prove to be pale examples of *Bubo virginianus occidentalis*, since, of course, the latter is the breeding form of North Dakota. The Arctic Horned Owl, however, does occur with apparent regularity as a winter resident, and the writer has examined several specimens from this State. Among these the following seem worthy of mention: Hebron, North Dakota, December 2, 1917, collected by S. A. Rahtz; Robinson, North Dakota, March 7, 1918, George H. Mayer; and Grand Forks, North Dakota, a specimen without date in the Museum of the University of North Dakota.—HARRY C. OBERHOLSER, *Washington, D. C., February 3, 1919.*

The Caracara in California.—I notice that according to Grinnell's *Distributional List of California Birds* some doubt exists regarding the occurrence of the Caracara within the state. I can say with positive certainty that one individual Caracara (*Polyborus cheriway*) lived for some time in the vicinity of Monterey during the winter of 1916. To be more exact, the month of February of that year witnessed one of the most severe storms in the history of the state, with southerly and southeasterly gales prevailing for several days. Upon their subsidence one of the wardens of the Pacific Improvement Company reported a strange bird in the vicinity of Seal Rocks. Mr. W. W. Curtner, a student at the Hopkin s Seaside Laboratory, made an investigation and pronounced the visitor to be a Caracara. The next day both of us journeyed by machine to the spot, made careful observations, took color notes and later examined museum specimens, all of which proved to our entire satisfaction that the bird in question was a female Caracara that probably had been swept before the wind from its southern home.

If we attempted to approach on foot the bird invariably took flight when we were at least an eighth of a mile away, and with alternate flapping of wings and soarings would skim over the level land situated between the sea and forest to alight in some distant tree. On the other hand, when we remained in the machine we had little difficulty in approaching to less than one hundred feet. Without displaying any particular interest in us the bird would strip bits of bark from its perch, flip them into the air, or would stand erect on its relatively long legs, stretch its wings, preen its feathers and finally vault into the air for another journey along the coast. It remained in the neighborhood of Seal Rocks for two weeks or so, and then, during a brief period of unusually bright weather, disappeared.—HAROLD HEATH, *Stanford University, California, March 19, 1919.*

The Fly-catching Habit Among Birds.—How extensive is the fly-catching habit among American birds other than members of the family Tyrannidae? The observation of this habit by the writer among members of different families of our land birds prompts the question. During the summer and fall of 1915 while engaged in field work in the Yosemite National Park and vicinity I specifically saw the following species flycatching. California Woodpecker (a common habit, frequently observed elsewhere); Clarke Nutcracker (several seen on various dates in late July flying out as much as 100 yards or more from the tops of tamarack pines at the side of a high mountain meadow); Western Lark Sparrow (one seen flycatching at dusk one evening early in June, at the edge of a meadow in the pine forest east of Coulterville); Audubon Warbler (a common habit, frequently observed elsewhere); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (once seen so engaged); Townsend Solitaire, Alaska Hermit Thrush, Western Robin, and Western and Mountain bluebirds. Thus all members of the thrush family except the Russet-backed and Northern Varied thrushes have been seen flycatching; the habit is a regular one with both bluebirds and seems not uncommon in the case of the Solitaire.—TRACY I. STORER, *Berkeley, February 7, 1919.*

Arctic Tern from Laguna Beach, California.—As there seem to be but few published records of the Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) for southern California, it probably will be of interest to record the capture of a bird of this species that I have in my collection, a female taken at Laguna Beach, Orange County, California, on May 1, 1915, by H. G. White. The above specimen (no. 864, coll. W. M. P.) has been identified by Dr. Grinnell.—WRIGHT M. PIERCE, *Claremont, California, February 8, 1919.*

Large Set of Eggs of the Canada Goose.—While on a collecting trip through northern California and southern Oregon in June and July, 1918, Summer Lake, Oregon, was visited June 21. Out in the lake about a quarter of a mile from the west shore is a small, low island, perhaps 300 feet long, 50 feet wide, rock at one end, sandy in most places, and with a maximum height above the water of only six or seven feet. There being no boat available, we decided to wade out to the island, if possible, through the alkali water and the very soft and very foul-smelling mud. Fortunately the water was only about three feet deep at its worst and the mud was at its worst where the water was at its best, albeit both were very, very bad everywhere and all the time.

We found the little island taken over almost or quite entirely by a colony of 150 to 200 pairs of California Gulls and the nesting season was at its height. The nests were thickly placed among the small lava rocks and more scatteringly over the sandy area. Many of the nests contained young of various sizes, from those just hatched to lusty youngsters that scrambled away and into the water at our near approach. Many nests contained eggs, usually two or three in number, and in all stages of incubation excepting that stage which the oologist regards as most satisfactory.

Two or three Caspian Terns were seen as we approached the islet but no nest was found. The only nest not a Gull's that we found was one of a Canada Goose. It was between two considerable chunks of lava on the end of the islet where the Gulls were least numerous. The eggs were *10 in number; and stale!* Evidently the old Goose (and a *real goose* she was, to build in a place like that!) had selected the site, built the nest, and laid her eggs; then the Gulls came. And when 300 to 400 noisy, pestiferous gulls go to house-keeping (such as it is) in your small back yard, it is time to vacate. At least so thought old Mrs. *Branta canadensis.* In the language of the street, "she beat it"; for which she has my sincere thanks, else I would not now possess the biggest set of Canada Goose eggs ever, if we may believe the records. The usual set is much fewer. Samuels says "about six"; Ridgway (Birds of Illinois), four to seven; Baird, Brewer, and Ridgway, five or six, rarely nine; Coues's Key, five to nine, usually five or six; Mrs. Bailey, six to [or] seven; and Grinnell, Bryant, and Storer, five to seven.

One of my oological friends suggests that two different birds laid in the same nest, an explanation which I utterly reject, because I can not believe there were *four* geese that were "such a goose" as to attempt to raise a family under such surroundings.

The measurements of these ten eggs in inches are as follows: 3.43x2.26; 3.33x2.35; 3.35x2.30; 3.48x2.36; 3.45x2.38; 3.40x2.45; 3.25x2.27; 3.41x2.28; 3.40x2.25; and 3.25x 2.25. Except for a few slight stains they are all beautiful specimens; but the blowin' of them was no joke!—BARTON WARREN EVERMANN, *Museum, California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, February 10, 1919.*

The Whistling Swan in Arizona.—About the middle of last December, there appeared on Howard Lake, a few miles from Williams, Arizona, a flock of eleven swans. Howard Lake is more of a mud pond than anything else, and in a very dry season there would be very little, if any, water there, I imagine. However, there has been plenty of water the last few years, so much so that perch were planted and I understand they have grown and increased.

Two of these swans were killed, one mounted and the other saved as a skin, and are still at Williams, where I saw the mounted one last week. I sent the measurements and particulars to my friend Ruthven Deane, and he confirms what I was practically sure of, that it is the Whistling Swan (*Olor columbianus*).

Is not this occurrence in Arizona, a rare one? It seems to me these birds must have been away off of their course.—W. B. MERSHON, *Saginaw, Michigan, March 22, 1919.*

Some Notes from San Diego County, California.—Whistling Swan (*Olor columbianus*). Though Stephens, in his "List of Birds of San Diego County" (Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist., vol. 3, no. 2, February 15, 1919), page 8, records the Whistling Swan as a rare winter visitant, I have seen no definite published records for that county. The following, therefore, may be of interest. In late December, 1917, O. W. Howard noted a flock of about thirty swans on lakes at Warner Springs, San Diego County. In November, 1918, while on a visit to this locality with Mr. Howard, I received from Mr. H. C. Gordon, of San Diego, considerable information on the birds of the region. Mr. Gordon

has resided in San Diego County for many years past, and regularly spends a portion of each winter hunting at Warner Springs. He stated that the Whistling Swan is a regular winter visitant to that section, though less plentiful than formerly. In a letter written from Warner Springs, December 21, 1918, Mr. Gordon states further: "A flock of over seventy-five swans came in a few days ago. All left in a day or two except six, two old birds and four cygnets."

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*). On November 29, 1918, while at Warner Springs, Mr. Gordon showed me the head and breast of a male Wood Duck that was killed a few days previous to this date. The hunter who killed it was not aware of its identity, a fact easily understood when its infrequent occurrence in the region is considered.

American Merganser (*Mergus americanus*). In the parlor of the Warner Springs Hotel is a mounted specimen of a drake American Merganser which, Mr. Gordon states, was killed in that locality three or four years since.—G. WILLETT, *Los Angeles, California, April 2, 1919.*

A Recent Record of Mycteria americana in the San Joaquin Valley.—So far as I have been able to learn, the Wood Ibis has been ascribed to the San Joaquin Valley principally upon the statement of Dr. J. G. Cooper (*Auk*, IV, 1887, p. 90) to the effect that it had formerly occurred in this region. There seemed little reason to doubt that the species still occurred sparingly, and occasional unfamiliar birds seen in flight, but not positively identified, further strengthened this belief.

I am now able to report that only recently I have had the pleasure of examining a mounted specimen of this bird, taken by Mr. Adrey E. Borell at his home four miles west of Fresno, on July 28, 1918. This Ibis, in company with two others, was seen flying over his home and was collected when the trio alighted in a tall eucalyptus tree. The bird was a female and evidently not fully adult, as a number of bluish feathers appear in certain parts of the plumage.—JOHN G. TYLER, *Turlock, California, March 8, 1919.*

California Gulls Eat Earthworms.—Although late in the spring, gulls have many times been seen towering above the University campus at Berkeley, ostensibly to gain sufficient height to cross the hills towards their breeding grounds in the interior somewhere, no opportunity to determine the species so as to add it to the campus list of birds has presented itself until this past winter. On December 8, 1918, a gull seen feeding on the parade grounds was positively identified as a California Gull. The appearance of gulls in the same place was reported several times during January. On February 9, 1919, two gulls of this species were seen in the same place. At first they seemed to be picking up pebbles; but when watched closely they appeared to spy some item of food and running quickly to it, to swallow it whole. Closer investigation showed that they were feeding upon earthworms which had been drawn to the surface by a recent rain. On retrospection it was remembered that the bird seen in December was feeding similarly just after a rain.—HAROLD C. BRYANT, *Berkeley, California, April 2, 1919.*

Miscellaneous Stomach Examinations.—The following bird stomachs were examined by Dr. H. C. Bryant. The results seem worthy of note.

No. 1. Buteo lineatus elegans, Red-bellied Hawk, taken near Corona, California, on February 27, 1916. The stomach contained: parts 5 Jerusalem crickets, *Stenopelmatus* sp.; 5 beetles, *Citones californicus?*; 1 beetle, Chrysomelidae.

No. 2. Buteo lineatus elegans, Red-bellied Hawk, taken near Corona, California, on February 27, 1916. Stomach contained one Pocket Gopher, *Thomomys bottae pallescens.*

No. 3. Asio wilsonianus, Long-eared Owl, taken February 27, 1916, near Corona, California. Stomach contained bones and hair of one Meadow Mouse, *Microtus californicus.*

No. 4. Archibuteo ferrugineus, Ferruginous Rough-leg, taken February 22, 1916, near Corona, Riverside County, California. The nearly empty stomach contained parts of one Skink, *Eumeces skiltonianus.* I have collected several of these hawks in the last few years and it is interesting to note that in nearly every instance the stomach was empty.—WRIGHT M. PIERCE, *Claremont, California, March 12, 1919.*

Aechmophorus occidentalis in Lower California in Summer.—There is apparently no certain breeding record for *Aechmophorus occidentalis* south of the United States, and in fact its nesting in the extreme southwestern corner of this country is largely inferential. It is known to spend the summer at Tulare Lake, and also in suitable places near San Diego, California, but there is no instance of the actual finding of the nest in either of these localities. In this connection it may be of interest to record two specimens of this species collected by Mr. L. J. Goldman of the Biological Survey in June, 1915, at Volcano Lake, northeastern Lower California. These are now, respectively, no. 259881, U. S. Nat. Mus., taken June 9, 1915, and no. 259882, U. S. Nat. Mus., taken June 10, 1915. Mr. Goldman reports that this species was common from May 1 to June 11 (when he left the region) in the delta of the Colorado River. He says that they moved principally in pairs, but he was unsuccessful in finding a nest.—HARRY C. OBERHOLSER, *Washington, D. C., February 3, 1919.*

Sea Parrots Washed up on Beach at Eureka.—One male *Fratercula corniculata*, and six *Lunda cirrhata* were taken February 16, 1919; also another lot on February 23, 1919, one male and one female *Fratercula corniculata* and twelve *Lunda cirrhata*. All were found dead on the beach and all were in winter plumage. Evidently a violent storm at sea had caused this fatality among the Puffins.—FRANKLIN J. SMITH, *Eureka, California, February 26, 1919.*

Notes on the Weights and Plumages of Ducks in New Mexico.—During the shooting seasons of 1917 and 1918 the writer kept a record of weights and peculiarities of plumage of ducks killed in the Rio Grande Valley near Albuquerque. The weight records, plotted as seasonal curves for each species, show tentatively some interesting facts.

The curves for all species are flat for the period from October 16 to November 1. The curves for all species show an increase in weight from November 1 to November 15. After November 15 the curves are subject to sudden drops, and during the winter period to very gradual drops. The sudden drops appear to be coincident with severe general storms. The gradual winter drop seems obviously due to cold weather and scarcer feed.

Weight curves for Mallards were drawn separately for hens and drakes. The curves for the two sexes are parallel, and show an apparently constant difference of a little more than one-half of a pound.

The sudden drops in the Mallard curves (assumed to be due to general storms) coincide interestingly with certain variations in plumage. When the season opens, on October 16, Mallard drakes, while easily recognizable, have the rusty heads, brown breast-spots, blackish wash on the under parts, and undeveloped curly feathers above the tail, all of which indicate immaturity. By November 15 practically full adult plumage is attained. But when the first cold storm has passed, *drakes of immature plumage and much lesser weight again appear.* Apparently the storm drives out most of the southern-raised, early-hatched, full-plumaged birds and replaces them with northern-raised late hatched birds of decidedly immature plumage. These late-flight birds are of lesser weight, not only because of immaturity, but probably also by reason of their long trip from the north. It is noticeable that these cold-wave Mallards are not so wary as the early November birds. Drakes with some indications of immature plumage are occasionally found even among the winter-resident ducks in January.

One often hears sportsmen boasting about four-pound ducks. I have yet to see one. The fall ducks here are all very fat, but the heaviest duck I have killed was a 3¼ lb. Mallard drake taken November 15, 1918. Individual drakes at any one time will vary ¾ lb. in weight. The lightest drake taken was one weighing 2 lbs., December 1, 1918. The average weight in November, when they are fat, is 2⅝ lbs.

Mallard hens weigh from 1¾ lbs. to 2¾ lbs. The average is 2⅛ lbs.

Pintails vary from early hens at 1¼ lbs. to late drakes at 2⅛ lbs. The average is 1⅝lbs.

Black Mallards (Mottled Duck?) vary from 2½ lbs. to 3 lbs.

Baldpates vary from 1¼ lbs. to 1¾ lbs.

Redheads vary from 1½ lbs. to 1⅞ lbs.; Canvasbacks from 1⅞ lbs. to 2⅛ lbs. Very few of these are killed here.

Gadwalls (scarce) weigh around 1⅞ lbs.

Spoonbills vary from 1 lb. to 1½ lbs.

Green-winged Teal early in the season weigh ¾ lbs. The few stragglers that winter here drop to ⅝ lbs.

None of these figures include cripples, since these are often abnormally emaciated.—ALDO LEOPOLD, *Secretary New Mexico Game Protective Association, Albuquerque, New Mexico, February 1, 1919.*

The Summer Tanager in California.—On March 10 of this year I took a specimen of the Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) in the Arroyo Seco between Los Angeles and Pasadena, California. The specimen was submitted to the members of the Southern Division of the Cooper Club and was also critically examined by Messrs. Grinnell and Swarth of the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. All agree upon the specific identity of the bird, although Grinnell and Swarth find slight divergences from the typical subspecies, *P. r. rubra*, and suggest that an extralimital race may be represented. It is not *P. r. cooperi*. The specimen, an immature male, has been deposited in the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, where the writer considers that all state records should be preserved.

The bird was quite shy and could not be approached within range. Only through repetition of the call note was it secured. Evidence of its having been in captivity is lacking and the wariness would point to its being an untamed bird, though the possibility must be conceded.

It may interest those collectors who think lightly of the collecting pistol as not sufficiently business-like, to know that this specimen and one other state record (Louisiana Water-thrush) would not have been secured except for such an arm.—LOYE MILLER, *State Normal School, Los Angeles, California, April 10, 1919.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The Cooper Club membership roster appearing in this issue of THE CONDOR shows that the Club is now made up of 6 Honorary members and 585 Active members. We are indebted to Mr. J. Eugene Law for compiling this annual roster, as has been the case now for several years passed. Corrections or changes should continue to be reported to Mr. Law, whose address is now the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, he having recently joined the staff of that institution as Curator in Osteology.

The many friends of Major Allan Brooks will rejoice in his recent safe return home after nearly five years service, with the Canadian army in France, almost from the very start of the war. One can imagine his delight to be once again among the forests and mountains of his own land, British Columbia. Accomplished as artist, accurate as observer, and skillful as collector, Brooks does highest credit to the science of ornithology and to the organizations to which he belongs, which promote this science.

Believing that a better knowledge of wild life will bring about better conservation of it, and that when people are on their summer vacations they are most responsive to appeal on this score, the California Fish and Game Commission backed by the Nature Study League will institute this coming summer a series of lectures and nature study field trips designed to stimulate interest in the proper conservation of natural resources. The Tahoe region has been selected for the work this year and lectures and field trips which will be open to the public without charge will be offered at six different resorts during the month of July. Illustrated lectures by Dr. H. C. Bryant on the game birds, song birds, mammals, and fishes will furnish evening entertainment, and early morning trips afield will give vacationists an introduction to mountain wild life. The motto of these classes will be: "Learn to read a roadside as one reads a book." Special excursions for children will be conducted.